



## Commission for **Adult Learners**

**October 19, 2016**

324 Outreach Building

and by Polycom

10:30 a.m

Minutes

Attendees: Albert Lozano, Chair; Ashley Adams, Jamie Campbell, Michelle Corby, Julie Cross, Renata Engel, Diana Gruendler, Jared Hammond, Martha Jordan, Leslie Laing, Michele Rice, Daad Rizk, Beth Seymour, David Smith, Patty Staskiel, Brooke Repine, Renee Thornton-Roop, Judy Wills, Recorder, and Liz Wright

Joined by Polycom: Francis Achampong, Kelly Austin, and JoAnne Carrick

Guests: Nakita Dolet, Graduate Assistant in World Campus Student Affairs Office; Kenyan Cattell, Financial Aid Coordinator, World Campus and Continuing Education; Spencer Lewis, Outreach Director of Development; and Bob Selego, Go 60 Student, University Park

Presenter: Anna Griswold, Executive Director for Student Aid and Assistant VP for Undergraduate Ed

Unable to attend: Sandy Feather, Paula Milone-Nuzzo, and Kristin Woolever

### 1. Announcements and updates

Michele Rice gave an update on course transfer review and the process to assist gathering and submitting syllabi. The Course Substitution Request System (CSRS) and LionPath will soon have a bi-directional interface. Once it is functional, staff can begin to clear up student records.

Rice is scheduled to visit Penn State Mont Alto later this month to help campus staff to leverage Prior Learning Assessment as often as possible in serving students. She also noted that her Council on PLA (CPLA) gave an update to ACUE that included its plan to begin to work on the University's Credit by Exam (CrX) procedure. CPLA looked at data from the past eight years and will meet with Liberal Arts and Eberly College of Science to discuss their exams as way to inform expanding CrX utilization in other areas.

Daad Rizk announced that as of October 6, the Provost approved plans to create a Financial Literacy Center at Penn State. The Financial Literacy initiative started as a combined effort between CAL and the Office of Student Aid. The center will be located in Grange Building and Rizk hopes it will be fully staffed and functional within three years. Rizk is in the process of reaching out to campuses to determine what topics are most needed. Rizk also gave an update on web traffic for the self-study modules on her web page.

Members approved the minutes of September 21, 2016, as submitted. They will be uploaded to the CAL web site

## 2. Financial Aid Updates

- a. Anna Griswold, Assistant Vice President Undergraduate Education/Executive Director for Student Aid, shared a student aid overview. Griswold's slides will be provided to members with the draft meeting minutes. As note, the data presented is based on 2015-16 undergraduates.

Items included:

Source and Type of Aid including breakout of federal and state aid with further breakout of loans by type.

Essential costs 2016-17 First-Year students for resident/non-resident and for UP and Commonwealth Campuses.

Growth in Penn State Funded Financial Assistance from 2007-08 through 2014-15 comparing central and annual/endowed. Griswold included figures for tuition during these same academic years. As note, the figures include athletic awards and employee tuition grant in aid. She also noted how endowment spending works, noting that each \$1 million endowment can assist about ten students.

Griswold shared breakout of adult learner borrowing trends for fiscal years 2010-11 through 2014-15. She included profile and characteristics of adult learners and all undergraduate aid recipients for 2013-14 and 2014-15 by residence, under -represented populations, gender, average age, average GPA, and Satisfactory Academic Progress eligibility. She covered debt load, number of students with debt at graduation, average debt amount, number with University scholarships, number, and percentage with Pell grants. Griswold noted that lack of parental support and higher borrowing limits impact debt amount for adults. Also, Parent Plus loans are not counted in the all-student figures.

She covered comparisons of first-generation students, median income, percentages with unmet need, and number with dependent children. She did not include median income comparison between adult learners and all undergraduate students because of parental income not applicable.

Griswold shared excerpts from an email from a commonwealth campus student who stopped out due to financial need, maxed out her loans, and ran out of eligible aid. This student worked through the adult learner advocacy office to connect to campus resources, and ultimately a package including University loans was put together to help her accomplish her academic goal of graduating within one year.

- b. Related discussions

Kenyan Cattell distributed an overview listing available 2016-17 Adult Learner Scholarships. This will be shared with members with draft meeting notes.

Cattell noted that the total number of endowed scholarships for adults will increase from sixteen to twenty over the next few years.

She shared information on World Campus Retention scholarships. These two are based on GPA and need index. For the most recent year, 83% of these recipients were adult learners. The average award amount was approximately \$1500 award split over fall and spring. These awards are distributed to students in their final year of study and who have run out of resources to help them finish. The population is targeted, and the committee reaches out to them.

Cattell noted that for the adult learner scholarships, campus students can apply mid-Jan through mid-March. Information and application are available on the World Campus web site. A communication goes out to campus financial aid coordinators to announce the application window.

Spencer Lewis shared that his office just received \$2 million as part of an estate gift, with \$1million designated for adult learners.

Michelle Rice added that her local VFW and other similar organizations may have resources that adult learners can utilize. For instance, an organization in her local area needs to donate 70% of their funds each year back to the community and provides funds to endow a scholarship at a local community college.

### 3. Committee, liaison, and task force reports

#### a. Faculty Senate Liaison: Beth Seymour

One new initiative this academic year is plan to bring groups of students before the senate at each meeting starts. Members asked Seymour to request to arrange including a group of adult students for one of the remaining plenary meetings. Leslie Laing can help recruit some University Park students, and Renata Engel and Ashley Adams suggested including a World Campus student in using its two-way robot.

#### b. Access and Affordability Task Force, Beth Seymour and JoAnne Carrick

The committee reviewed materials from its first meeting to look at comparison between completing the same degree if enrolled full-time versus part-time. The group is considering creative ideas defray to the cost differential. They will also examine ideas to identify how to fund difference. Commission members not on the task force can send ideas to Carrick. During its fall meetings, the task force will further refine models and criteria for providing updates.

#### c. Adult Learner Engagement Committee (ALEC), Jamie Campbell

The committee is hoping to review the student survey CAL conducted which identified gaps as basis to form its direction. They will consult with DAAs at campuses and the World Campus Student Advisory Board to further identify student wants and needs.

Campbell shared overview of this article from Atlantic magazine about adult learners and child care,

<http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/10/completing-a-degree-raising-a-child/503894/>. Members asked whether this is an item that the

Commission for Women is working on. Campbell will ask, and if so suggested this may be an opportunity for collaboration.

d. Hendrick Award and Conference Planning, Francis Achampong and Judy Wills

The committee launched the communications efforts for soliciting nominations for the 2017 Shirley Hendrick Award. The nomination deadline is November 30, 2016. In addition to targeted email groups across the Penn State community, the committee submitted an announcement to the Penn State News to publish by the first week of November. Achampong will gather a selection committee which will include outgoing members of CAL (Kelly Austin, Jo Anne Carrick, Brooke Repine), Daad Rizk will be invited as 2016 recipient, Martha Jordan as CAL's University liaison. He will also reach out to our executive sponsors asking them to appoint a selection group member.

The committee also began reviewing conference sessions from 2016 for those which can be brought forward. There are a limited number of breakout rooms available at the event venue, which may reduce the number of overall breakouts sessions we can offer.

e. Military and Veteran Support Services

Until the announcement naming the first senior director for Veterans Affairs and Services, the committee discussed whether to pursue alternative methods of outreach to staff/faculty regarding identification of veteran faculty/staff and willingness to mentor/tutor veteran students and decided to pursue having an "opt-in" announcement piggy-back on Military Appreciation Week advertisements on newswire and elsewhere.

The committee discussed education of faculty/staff in regards to veteran needs and creating incentives/buy-in to have those individuals complete the OL-1700 course online and will follow up to determine whether the course could become a mandatory part of online education training for instructors/faculty. This course would be appealing to grad students who are teaching to assist them in obtaining jobs where they can boast a veteran's specialty certification.

The committee also discussed development of World Campus veteran student/staff needs assessment. World Campus was not included in the most recent survey. The committee will reach out to the World Campus marketing staff to determine if this is already being worked on, and if not, we will connect them with research to begin the process of creating this survey.

As note, the "A Time to Heal" project will be bringing the travelling Vietnam Wall to Penn State University Park next year.

4. Lozano adjourned the meeting at 12:30 p.m.

Submitted by Judy Wills